c.　　Amendments to Claims

1. (Original) A method for distributing file content via one or more cache providers, comprising:

a) purchasing one or more commodity contracts, wherein each commodity contract specifies a right to use a stated amount of cache resources belonging to a contracted cache provider during a specified time interval for servicing download requests;

b) making file content accessible to at least one contracted cache provider wherefrom it will be available to users for downloading; and

c) taking action which causes one or more devices to redirect download requests that were initially directed to a content provider, such that the requests will be redirected to said at least one contracted cache provider.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the method is carried out by a content provider, at least one of the commodity contracts is purchased from an intermediate party distinct from said at least one contracted cache provider, and the method further comprises directing at least one payment to the intermediate party for a service performed by said at least one contracted cache provider.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the commodity contracts is purchased through a broker.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the commodity contracts is purchased from an exchange, and the method further comprises directing at least one payment to the exchange for a service performed by the pertinent contracted cache provider.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein commodity contracts are purchased from two or more distinct cache providers so as to collectively provide for the servicing of download requests in a desired group of time intervals from a desired group of locations.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising selecting the two or more distinct cache providers in such a way as to drive down a total cost of the commodity contracts.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising paying a fee for at least one cache provider to service at least one download request, wherein the fee is based, at least in part, on total download bandwidth.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the cache resources comprise bandwidth.

9. (Original) A method, comprising:

a) selling one or more commodity contracts, wherein each commodity contract specifies an amount of cache resources to be made available during a specified time interval for servicing download requests directed to a content provider's file content;

b) as a result of redirection, receiving one or more download requests that were initially directed to one or more content providers; and servicing one or more of the redirected download requests in accordance with one or more of the commodity contracts.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein at least one of the commodity contracts is sold to an intermediate party distinct from the pertinent content provider, and the method further comprises directing at least one bill to the intermediate party for servicing a download request.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein at least one of the commodity contracts is sold through a broker.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein at least one of the commodity contracts is purchased from an exchange, and the method further comprises directing at least one payment to the exchange for a service performed by the pertinent cache provider.

13. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein commodity contracts are sold to two or more distinct content providers so as to collectively allocate a desired fraction of total cache resources in a desired group of time intervals.

14. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising sending a bill for the servicing of at least one download request, wherein the amount of the bill is based, at least in part, on total download bandwidth.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the bill is directed to an intermediate party distinct from the content provider on whose behalf the download request is serviced.

16. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the cache resources comprise bandwidth.

17. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:

a) purchasing, via a terminal of a computer network, at least one commodity contract from each of one or more cache providers, wherein each commodity contract specifies a right to use a stated amount of cache resources belonging to a contracted cache provider during a specified time interval for servicing download requests; and

b) reselling at least one said commodity contract for ultimate acquisition by a content provider.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the purchase and the resale of the commodity contract are made directly from a cache provider and to a content provider, respectively.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the purchase of the commodity contract is made from an intermediate party, or the resale of the commodity contract is made to an intermediate party, and the intermediate party is distinct from the pertinent cache provider and the pertinent content provider.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the purchase of the commodity contract is made from an intermediate party, and the resale of the commodity contract is made to an intermediate party, and both said intermediate parties are distinct from the pertinent cache provider and the pertinent content provider.

21. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein two or more commodity contracts are purchased from a single cache provider and resold to a plurality of content providers.

22. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein commodity contracts are purchased from two or more distinct cache providers and resold to a single content provider.

23. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein said purchasing and reselling steps are carried out by a commodity exchange.

24. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising: providing at least one payment, ultimately to be directed to a cache provider, for the servicing of a download request by the cache provider; and providing at least one bill, ultimately to be directed to a content provider, for the servicing of the download request.

25. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising, responsive to the purchase and resale of at least one said commodity contract, taking action which causes one or more devices to redirect download requests that were initially directed to the content provider, such that the requests will be directed to one or more of the cache providers.

26. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the cache resources comprise bandwidth.